



Christopher W. Wenk

Director

International Trade Policy

June 28, 2006

Ways and Means Committee Members
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of National Association of Manufacturers, the nation's largest industrial trade association, representing small and large manufacturers in every industrial sector and in all 50 states, I urge you to support H.R. 5684, the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act. Successful passage of this agreement will help solidify the strong ties that currently exist between our country and Oman, a key ally in the Middle East.

This bilateral agreement is an important step toward implementing the Middle East Free Trade Area (MEFTA), which when taken as a whole would be one of our top ten export markets. This agreement has met all of the objectives for negotiating such pacts, as prescribed by Congress under Trade Promotion Authority. Therefore, it will create economic benefits for both the U.S. and Oman and will highlight the strategic benefits of expanding trade for other nations in the Arab region.

Once enacted, the U.S.-Oman Free Trade Agreement will benefit U.S. manufacturing and deserves bipartisan support. All American-made consumer and industrial products will enter Oman duty-free gaining even greater market share for U.S. manufacturers who exported nearly \$600 million worth of goods in 2005. Furthermore, this trade agreement will solidify Oman's commitment to liberalized trade, regulatory transparency and enforcement of U.S. intellectual property rights.

Importantly, 94 percent of the U.S. manufactured goods trade deficit arises from countries with which the United States has no bilateral free trade agreements. The manufactured goods trade deficit with U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) partners during the January-April 2006 period shrunk for the fourth year in a row. Finally, during that same period, the U.S. surplus with the Middle East jumped 40 percent to \$6.9 billion.

The NAM urges you to support H.R. 5684, the United States-Oman Free Trade Agreement Implementation Act, as a means to level the playing field for U.S. companies in a region with increased export opportunities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Christopher Wenk", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Christopher Wenk

Manufacturing Makes America Strong